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Remarks

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**3637** (10-81)

Executive Secretary  
9 May 1985  
Date



United States Department of State

*United States Permanent Mission to the  
Organization of American States*

*Washington, D. C. 20520*

April 30, 1985

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Dear Bill:

At this time when so much is being said about our relations with Nicaragua, and when decisions are being taken which could have momentous impact on the future of our country, I thought you might be interested in our most recent declaration to the Permanent Council of the Organization of American States - Nicaragua: The Stolen Revolution.

Despite a massive disinformation campaign by the Sandinistas, they are every day moving further away from their human rights and democracy commitments to us at the OAS and closer to becoming a total Marxist-Leninist state.

As I leave the area to go on to another assignment in Europe, I remain seriously concerned about Central America because the Sandinistas are conducting the same sort of disinformation campaign that I saw Castro perform when I was in Cuba in the late '50's. The main difference is that the Sandinistas have been more clever in not stating as early their Marxist-Leninist intentions.

As I see it, once they totally consolidate power with the help of the Soviets and Castro, no country in the region, including Mexico, will be immune from their exported subversion.

Sincerely,

J. William Middendorf II  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative

Enclosure:

As stated.

The Honorable  
William J. Casey,  
Director of Central Intelligence.



C 387

Current  
Policy  
No. 679

# Nicaragua: The Stolen Revolution

March 27, 1985



United States Department of State  
*Bureau of Public Affairs*  
Washington, D.C.

*Following is an address by Ambassador J. William Middendorf II, U.S. Permanent Representative to the Organization of American States (OAS), before the OAS Permanent Council Meeting, Washington, D.C., March 27, 1985.*

The U.S. delegation wishes to note that on July 18, 1984, we last raised the matter of Nicaragua's failure to live up to its solemn promises of July 12, 1979, to the Secretary General of this body. They promised the OAS to hold early free elections, to establish an independent judiciary, and to uphold human rights. The OAS, in turn, for the first and only time in its history, withdrew its support for a sitting member government.

It is my delegation's sad duty to report that, since that date, no progress has been made in the fulfillment of any of these promises. We, therefore, have a continuing responsibility to monitor this situation until these commitments are fulfilled to this body's satisfaction.

When Sandinista troops entered Managua on July 19, 1979, they were met by joyous throngs of Nicaraguan citizens who believed that, at long last, freedom and economic well-being were at hand. We all know now that the Sandinista revolution was stolen—stolen by a small, hardcore group of Marxist-Leninists who did not represent majority opinion within the Sandinista movement but who had long conspired to take the movement over and who were armed to make it possible to carry out their plan.

## **Impact of Sandinista Rule**

Let us look first at the impact almost 6 years of *Sandinismo* have had on the ordinary Nicaraguan people. We are not talking now about political figures or business leaders but about the Nicaraguan "man in the street"—the ordinary Nicaraguan whose only ambition is to make a decent enough living to support his family. What is happening to this ordinary Nicaraguan today?

- His children don't have enough to eat. Robert Leiken, who initially strongly supported the revolution, wrote in the *New Republic* on October 8, 1984, that children were supposed to be the "spoiled ones" of the revolution. Instead, he noticed on his visit last year far more naked children with signs of malnutrition than he had ever seen before in Nicaragua. Most foodstuffs are rationed, with the local Committees for the Defense of *Sandinismo* handing out ration cards—or withholding them for citizens who show "insufficient revolutionary fervor."

- His older children, from age 11 on up, face the possibility of being drafted into the Sandinista Armed Forces. Strong-arm recruiters snatch them off the streets or from their schoolrooms to fill the ranks of the Sandinista military, which now outnumbers all of the other military forces of Central America combined.

- His freedom of speech is sorely limited. The Committees for the Defense of *Sandinismo* keep their eye on him. If he complains to a neighbor about something the government has done, he

may find himself hauled before a neighborhood court, with no appeal of any sentence that court hands down allowed.

- His freedom to be informed about national and international events is restricted. Radio and television news are under government control, and they broadcast only what the Sandinista party wants them to. There is only one opposition newspaper, *La Prensa*, and it is so heavily censored by government censors that it frequently suspends publication because after the censors are through there is not enough news left to print. And sometimes the government orders it to suspend publication anyway.

- His livelihood is threatened. If he works in the private sector, the gradual elimination of private enterprise by the Sandinista government may leave him without a job. If he is a farmer, under the laws establishing state agencies—which are the only entities to which he is allowed to sell his produce, at a non-negotiable price fixed by the government—he may not even hold back seed for next season's planting. He may not receive enough income to make ends meet.

- The average Nicaraguan has always been religious. He has usually been a devout Catholic or, in the case of the Miskito Indians, a devout Moravian. Now, he finds his church leaders, including the Pope, harassed by Sandinista youth mobs, the "*Turbas Divinas*." He finds his priest or pastor accused of being "a counterrevolutionary" when he refuses to praise the Sandinista government in his sermons. He can no longer hear the Archbishop's homily on radio or television because the Sandinistas do not allow it to be broadcast without their prior censorship, something to which the Archbishop has understandably refused to submit.

Compare his situation with that of ordinary citizens in neighboring Costa Rica and Honduras, and you will see the contrast. While those countries have problems, they are working democracies where people can say what they please, don't have to worry about their children being drafted, and where farmers can sell their produce in the market themselves or choose among several competing middlemen who will buy the produce for resale.

Yet the Sandinista leaders say that countries such as Honduras and Costa Rica must undergo their own revolutions. Interior Minister Tomas Borge, in his interview in *Playboy* magazine of September 1983, was asked to respond to the Reagan Administration contention that, following its triumph in Nicaragua,

the revolution will be exported to El Salvador, then Guatemala, then Honduras, then Mexico. Borge replied: "That is one historical prophecy of Ronald Reagan's that is absolutely true."

On the second anniversary of the Sandinista revolution, Borge gave a speech in Managua in which he said: "This revolution goes beyond our borders. Our revolution was always internationalist. . . ."

In our special session on February 29, 1984, my esteemed colleague from Nicaragua told this body:

If we had wanted to attack Costa Rica with a specific end in mind, we would have done so, and they wouldn't even have had enough time to ask that a special session be called, because by then they would have been occupied. . . .

While supposedly denying an intention of invading Costa Rica, this statement shows how confident the Sandinistas are in their ability to invade their southern neighbor successfully, if they ever feel the desire to do so.

### Broken Promises

I think it is worth asking, taking into account these statements I have just mentioned as well as many others, what makes anyone believe that the Sandinista government is willing to live in peace with its neighbors? Just because they have stated their peaceful intentions?

You will recall that promises made to this body on July 12, 1979, have not been kept. How, then, can we assume that promises not to attack their neighbors will be kept by the Sandinistas? When almost daily we observe shots fired by the Sandinistas across the Honduran and Costa Rican borders, and guerrillas trained by the Sandinistas carry on their activities in El Salvador and Guatemala, and Managua has been the command center for the guerrilla activities throughout Central America—can we believe their avowal of peaceful intentions?

Let us review the record again. In 1979 the Sandinista junta promised the OAS that it would respect human rights, set up an independent judiciary, and hold "the first free elections in this country."

**Human Rights.** As I have already pointed out, human rights have been violated on a massive scale. The mistreatment of the Miskito and other Indian tribes was especially noteworthy. Shortly after the revolution, the Miskito Indians' traditional homelands were flooded with Cuban and Nicaraguan personnel who said they were there to

"rescue" them. The attempt was made to force them to give up their traditional way of life and adopt the Marxism-Leninism of the revolution. As Freedom House said at the time, the program "is to deprive them of their socio-cultural identity." Their traditional, freely elected leaders were replaced with Sandinista-appointed authorities—some of them Cubans.

Massive relocation of the Miskitos, as well as other tribes such as the Sumo and the Rama, was undertaken. In some instances where they resisted, Miskitos were killed. Men, women, and children were forced to walk long distances on foot. Their farm animals were often appropriated by the state. Ominously, we hear reports today of a similar involuntary forced relocation of people from a wide area in rural northern Nicaragua and of Sandinista army personnel putting the torch to the fields left behind. So much for the promise to the OAS to respect human rights.

**Independent Judiciary.** In 1979 the Sandinista junta promised this body that an independent judiciary would be established. Yet justice has become the servant of Sandinista totalitarianism. The neighborhood courts, where people are judged for such "crimes" as failing to attend Sandinista party rallies, hand down sentences which are not subject to judicial review. The nominally independent Supreme Court of Justice has limited power to review decisions handed down by lower courts. The right of *habeas corpus* has been practically eliminated.

The recent Urbina Lara case illustrates the lack of respect Sandinista justice has for the traditional Latin American doctrine of asylum. Mr. Urbina Lara, who had taken refuge in the Costa Rican Embassy, was forcibly removed from the Embassy building, wounded, and imprisoned by Sandinista authorities at a moment when the Costa Rican diplomats had briefly left the Embassy building unoccupied except for Mr. Urbina Lara. Mr. Urbina Lara was allowed to leave Nicaragua only after the incident threatened to disrupt the Contadora peace process. We understand that President Ortega has told high-level visitors to Managua that Urbina Lara left the Embassy of his own accord. On his arrival in Colombia, however, Mr. Urbina Lara confirmed the details of this breach of the principle of diplomatic asylum. Meanwhile, his defense lawyer was detained for several days in a Managua jail without charges. So much for the Sandinista promise to the OAS of justice.

**Free Elections.** Finally, in 1979 the Sandinista junta promised early, free elections. Late last year, "elections" were held. But they were nothing but a sham, as the Sandinista government refused to create the conditions whereby the largest opposition coalition, the *Coordinadora Democratica Nicaraguense*, could have any chance to compete. That group's candidate, Arturo Cruz, who had, at one time, been the Sandinista government's own ambassador to Washington, had his rallies disrupted by Sandinista youth mobs—the so-called *Turbas Divinas*—on repeated occasions during the preelectoral period. His pronouncements were censored from the opposition newspaper, *La Prensa*, and were not carried by the government print and broadcast media. Indeed, Sandinista censors have assured that criticism of the government is all but absent from the media.

Faced with the situation in which the Sandinista government would not allow Cruz to conduct a full and free campaign, after many attempts to negotiate campaign guarantees, the *coordinadora* refused to participate in the election campaign.

Two other parties intended to pull out also. In one case, mobs broke up a meeting of the *Partido Conservador Democrata* at which a vote to pull out of the elections was about to be taken, with a clear majority in favor. In the other case, *Partido Liberal Independiente* candidate Virgilio Godoy announced on October 21 that he was withdrawing his candidacy, but the government press continued to run his campaign advertisements, and *La Prensa* was censored when it attempted to report the withdrawal.

No matter how honest the vote counting itself, an election is nothing more than a sham if parties who wish to run are not given the chance to mount a full and fair campaign.

I think it would be interesting to see what Sandinista leaders themselves have said about elections. In May 1984 Comandante Bayardo Arce, one of the nine members of the Sandinista Directorate gave a speech to the Nicaraguan Socialist Party. He did not realize that the speech was being tape-recorded. A text of it appeared in the Barcelona newspaper, *La Vanguardia*, on July 31, 1984, and I note that the Sandinista government has never denied the authenticity of the text. Comandante Arce said, "... of course, if we did not have the war situation imposed on us by the United States, the electoral problem would be totally out of place in terms of its usefulness. ..."

If we analyze this statement, we are led to believe that if the freedom

fighters had not waged their valiant fight to force the Sandinistas to live up to their promises, the junta never would have held elections.

Comandante Arce also said:

... We think the electoral process ... was and continues being an offensive tool from the standpoint of confronting U.S. policy. ... It is well to be able to call elections and take away from American policy one of its justifications for aggression against Nicaragua ... bourgeois democracy has an element which we can manage and even derive advantages from for the construction of socialism in Nicaragua ... we are using an instrument claimed by the bourgeoisie, which disarms the international bourgeoisie, in order to move ahead to matters that are for us strategic ... we believe that the elections should be used in order to vote for Sandinismo, which is being challenged and stigmatized by imperialism, in order to demonstrate that, in any event, the Nicaraguan people are for that totalitarianism, the Nicaraguan people are for Marxism-Leninism ... we see the elections as one more weapon of the revolution. ...

There you have the affirmation, in Comandante Arce's own words, that the elections were held not because of the Sandinistas' love for democracy but for purely tactical reasons. Is it any wonder, then, that they established conditions under which only the Sandinista party had any chance of victory? Had they given the *coordinadora democratica* a fair chance to campaign on an equal footing, the Sandinistas would have been in danger of being swept out of office—something they could not risk. Thus, on November 4, 1984, the election which was held had to be the sham that it was. So much for the Sandinista promises to the OAS Secretary General in 1979.

### U.S. Initiatives

In this connection I would like to note that Congressman Claude Pepper, who honors us with his presence today, has written my country's President, Ronald Reagan, to call attention to the recommendation of the U.S. Congress, embodied in Public Law 98-215 of December 9, 1983. This recommendation proposes that the President seek the prompt reconvening of the 17th meeting of consultation of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs for the purpose of evaluating the compliance of the Sandinista government with respect to the promises to the OAS and also to consider whether that government is living up to the terms of the OAS Charter.

I would also note that I have received the text of House Resolution 81 of March 7, 1985, sponsored by 56

members of the U.S. Congress, which calls on the President to grant explicit recognition to the democratic Nicaraguan resistance and urges the President and all members of the OAS to support the Nicaraguan resistance—the so-called *contras*—in their quest for peace, human rights, free elections, and national reconciliation. Yesterday, Senator Durenberger spoke to the National Press Club about the Nicaraguan situation.

My government's efforts to get the Sandinistas to live up to their promises has often been branded by them as a lonely effort by President Reagan which does not have the support of the American people or their elected representatives in the Congress. I would submit that the existence of these congressional initiatives by congressmen from both the Democratic and Republican Parties shows the deep concern of the American people about the danger to the peace and security of the hemisphere posed by the actions of the Sandinista dictatorship.

### The Search for a Solution

I would also like to take note of the recent document on national dialogue of the Nicaraguan resistance, proclaimed in San Jose, Costa Rica, on March 2, 1985, by the *coordinadora democratica*, which has named as its representatives Arturo Cruz, Alfonso Robelo, and Adolfo Calero.

In it, they request that the Sandinista government engage in a national dialogue leading to democratization of Nicaragua—a political system which guarantees real separation of power, development, and reconstruction; recognition of civilian primacy over the state; full respect for human rights; demilitarization of the society; a foreign policy which emphasizes good relations with neighboring states; an economic system which gives importance to the development of the private sector; institution of a multiparty system which guarantees alternation in power and respect for minorities; freedom to organize labor unions; agrarian reform; municipal autonomy; respect for the culture and traditions of the Atlantic coast; a general political amnesty; and expulsion from the country of advisers from Cuba and other communist countries.

In this connection, the *coordinadora* is not asking that Daniel Ortega be ousted as president, but only that he live up to the 1979 promises to the OAS. It is a pity that the Sandinista government did not take advantage of this opportuni-

ty to resolve Nicaragua's problems by peaceful means.

Up to now, the Sandinistas have refused calls for dialogue with the opposition. Yet, in El Salvador and Colombia we have recently seen the occurrence of dialogue with the armed opposition, so why should Nicaragua be a special case where dialogue is inadmissible?

We are told constantly by the Sandinistas that the armed resistance in Nicaragua is nothing more than a movement of former *Somocistas* who are battling to return to power. This lie has been repeated so often that even some of my own country's press seems to have accepted it as true.

I note also that the Contadora group will meet next month in the hopes of establishing a final solution to the Central American problem. It is my hope that this process will finally resolve the crisis not only in Nicaragua but in all of Central America. I would like to say at this point, however, that any agreement is only so many pieces of paper until it is put into practice. Once again, foolproof measures of verification must be included in any such agreement if it is to be effective. I note the words of Lenin, as quoted by C. L. Sulzberger in the *New York Times* of June 13, 1956. Lenin said: "We must be ready to employ

trickery, deceit, law breaking, withholding and concealing truth." The Sandinista leaders have proclaimed many times that they are Marxist-Leninists. Are they in accord with this statement by Lenin?

My government only asks that the Sandinista government live up to its solemn commitments to the OAS. I would note that no government provided more aid to the Sandinistas during its first 18 months in power than the United States, which gave \$118 million in aid. The Sandinista government began its inordinate military buildup immediately upon taking office, when the resistance had not yet formed. Texts used in literacy programs and elementary education from the beginning of the revolution used perjorative terms against my country. *Radio Sandino*, from the beginning of the revolution, attacked my country in the most vicious terms. On 15 different occasions over a period of 4 years, President Ortega falsely and irresponsibly accused my government of organizing an imminent invasion of his country, a tactic similar to that used by Castro 20 years ago in Cuba to consolidate power. The record shows that militarism and hostility to the United States were hallmarks of this Cuban-Soviet style revolution from the very beginning.

It is my hope that peace will return to Nicaragua through one or another of the processes that I have mentioned here; but if no process is successful, I would remind this body of its responsibilities. In the final instance, the Organization of American States has a responsibility to assure peace in Nicaragua, since in 1979 it took the unprecedented step of withdrawing support from a sitting member government in Nicaragua and replacing it with the Sandinista junta. My government does not intend to allow this organization to ignore its responsibilities in this regard and reserves the right at some future date to introduce a resolution leading toward the satisfactory resolution of the Nicaraguan problem, if the processes which I have already detailed do not bear fruit. ■

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